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DR. W. S. LONG: TEACHER

By E. W. KNIGHT

The University of North Carolina

SIXTY-THREE YEARS successful teaching experience; county superintendent of schools under Dr. Calvin H. Wiley, North Carolina's first state superintendent of public instruction, and under every succeeding state superintendent of public instruction which North Carolina has had, except Dr. E. C. Brooks; founder and first president of a college; devoted preacher and leader in his denomination for more than a half century,—these services form a part of the contribution to the educational and religious life of North Carolina made by Dr. William S. Long, of Chapel Hill, who celebrates his eighty-third birthday tomorrow. Dr. Long is among the oldest, if not the oldest, of the active teachers of North Carolina today, and he probably has the widest first-hand acquaintance with the educational history of this state.

Dr. Long was born in Alamance County, October 22, 1839. At the age of sixteen he was prepared for college. He was very eager to secure a college education, but his father was unwilling to do more for one of his seven sons than for another and he seemed unable then to send them all to college. However, he agreed to lend William the money for that purpose. The son was to pay the father for time also and to keep an itemized account of all expenditures, giving his note any paying interest at six per cent. Later he repaid the cost of his college education, in large part, by preparing his own brothers for college in a school which he had established after the war. The father gave him credit for the tuition of his brothers, and as they became prepared for college they borrowed money from their father just as William had done. They in turn gave their notes and in this way all obtained a college course.

William finished his college course in 1860 and took charge of an academy in Virginia. In October of that year he was licensed to preach by the North Carolina Conference of the Christian Church. At the close of the Civil War he opened a school in Graham, which he called Graham High School, and there he continued to teach until 1890. In 1888 the Southern Christian Convention adopted Mr. Long's school as a denominational college and he turned it over to that body. The school was chartered as Elon College and Mr. Long was made the first president. In 1890 the institution was transferred from Graham to the present location. Meantime he had had other valuable educational experiences. In July 1858 a teachers' institute was held at the court-

house in Graham, Alamance County, conducted by Professor W. H. Doherty who had been associated with Horace Mann at Antioch College, Ohio. Mr. Long, who had been a student of Doherty served as the lat-



DR. W. S. LONG

ter's assistant at this institute, which was the first teachers' institute ever held in North Carolina. Calvin H. Wiley was present and took part in the program as was also Professor J. D. Campbell who had commenced the republication of the *North Carolina Journal of Education*, in Greensboro.

Superintendent Wiley was interested in the young teacher and secured him to collect certain facts in regard to the school conditions of Alamance. Shortly afterwards Mr. Long was appointed examiner of teachers, or superintendent of schools, for Alamance, and from that time, with the exception of short intervals, he served as county examiner or superintendent under every state superintendent except the present one, Dr. E. C. Brooks.

Dr. Long has been honored in many ways. For eight years he was president of the Southern Christian Convention. In 1872 Trinity College conferred on him the degree of Master of Arts, and in 1890 the Union Christian College of Indiana conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. He also holds a degree of LL.D. of Elon College. For thirty years he was a leading teacher and preacher in North Carolina and he had

much to do with the establishment of the graded schools in Burlington, Graham and Haw River.

In spite of his eighty-three years, packed full of devoted service to his church and state, Dr. Long is still very active, and takes a lively interest in educational and public matters. He has been teaching in the public schools of Orange County for several years, last year serving as principal of a two-teacher school four miles from Chapel Hill near the Chatham County line. He is a regular attendant at the monthly teachers' meetings of Orange County and his advice is often sought by the school authorities. He is greatly beloved not only in Chapel Hill but throughout the state where he is widely known. He is modest and has never pressed claim for public confidence and favor but has enjoyed and still enjoys a large share of both. As pioneer in public education Dr. Calvin H. Wiley had in him a staunch supporter at a time when the public school idea in North Carolina was making a hard fight for the place which it deserved. His long service as teacher and school administrator has given him a first-hand knowledge of educational conditions in North Carolina which few people possess. His reminiscences of early school practices are full of valuable information concerning the early educational life in his native state.

THE SPANISH COLUMN*

Conducted By DR. S. E. LEAVITT

Language Change†

WHAT FOLLOWS is not intended as a complete discussion; it merely indicates some of the more significant and obvious facts of language change.

We have all heard baseball's cry of approval: "Atta boy!" the short cut for "That's the boy!" Similarly, *old* sounds as 'ol in "old boy;" *olt* in "old timer;" "pass your plate" becomes "pasherplate;" "did you" metamorphoses to "didju;" "last year" sounds as "lascheer;" "literature" develops into "literachur."

These forms look strange—we deny that we say them; but when we speak on, currently and negligently, they are the forms we use. They have found their way only into "dialect" writing; and accustomed as we are to conventional forms of spelling only, we disavow them. But they exist nevertheless.

Language is in a constant process of change. Our accent, many of the words we use, our intonation, are

* Two errors, for which the Editor of the JOURNAL is alone responsible, crept into the Spanish Column for October. First, Dr. Shapiro was credited with conducting the "Column," whereas he should have been credited only with the authorship of the article which appeared therein. The Editor of the Spanish Column is Dr. S. E. Leavitt. The second error was one of omission: it should have been announced that Dr. Shapiro's article would be continued in our November issue. The Editor regrets the errors, and takes this occasion to make amends for them.—N. W. W.

† Continuation of article appearing in October number.

not the same as those of our parents. From generation to generation we are transforming our spoken language. The written language, however, is slower to follow the changes—it is conservative; and with the aid of the schools, it tends to check the forces breaking down language. When schools were not common—as during the period of the barbaric invasions of the Roman Empire—such change was quickened. In countries and periods like ours, with schools fairly common and efficient, language change is comparatively slow. Now, this change, the transformation of forms, is caused by the tendency of speakers to abbreviate expression. Why say "That is the boy" when we can say "Atta boy" more briefly and just as intelligibly? or "He is not" when we can say "Isn't he"? or "Shall he not" when we can say the shorter "Sha'n't he" and be just as well understood. In general, then, language shortens speech in so far as it can be shortened and still remain intelligible.¹

Various other influences are operative in changing language. Sounds—the spoken equivalent of written letters—are produced in the mouth, chiefly. The mouth is a sounding box; and by means of variations in size and shape (brought about by the movement of the tongue and lips) it produces different sounds. These sounds we represent, imperfectly enough, by the alphabet. Now when, in speaking, we pass from one sound to another, that is, to express it in mechanical terms, from one size and shape of the mouth to another, we unconsciously produce a transition sound. Thus, in pronouncing "sense," we actually say "cents," a *t* being produced in the passage from *n* to *s*. In Spanish, this principle explains the *d* in the contracted futures of *vendré pondré*, and others, from *ven[i]ré*, *pon[e]ré*. Sometimes, too, we are led to mispronounce a word under the influence of some more familiar or simple one. *Asparagus* becomes *sparrowgrass*; *carton* becomes *cartoon*; and suite (sweet) of furniture becomes a *suit* (soot) of furniture. New generations, children, migrations of masses of people, produce and perpetuate changes.

Thus, from generation to generation, our language changes; we try to economize time; incidental sounds develop; chance similarities are incorporated; children, various localities with their peculiarities, immigration, have varying influence. As a result, our conventional spelling, every fifty or hundred years, tries to adjust itself. The language is different, has changed.

Now, exactly this happened to Latin. Latin, once the language of Italy, Spain, Portugal, Gaul, Britain, Helvetia, much of the region northeast of Greece

¹ Abbreviations are the same thing in writing—conventional short-cuts. We all know what Mr., M.D., P.D.Q., Q.E.D., R.S.V.P. mean, and we usually employ them to save time.